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In 1998, the Wyoming Agricultural Mediation Law was expanded to include the use of Technical Review Teams (TRT's) to help resolve disputes related to grazing permits on public lands. Any individual or entity who has a permit or lease on grazing land administered by a federal or state agency is eligible to ask for assistance when a dispute arises over a grazing allotment or permit. Disputes can be on grazing allotments administered by the U.S. Forest Service, BLM or other federal agency or on leased land administered by the State Land Board or other state agency.

**What is a TRT?** TRT members must be range scientists with a broad background in public land issues. They will assist permittees and the agencies in evaluating the grazing allotment and reaching agreement on management decisions.

**How to get started:** Permittees may request assistance either before or after a decision is rendered. However, if assistance is asked for after the agency has provided notice of an adverse decision, there are strict timeframes that have to be followed.

**What will the Mediation Program do?** Once we have received a request for assistance, we will contact the permittees and the agency to get a clearer picture of the nature of the dispute. We will then select a TRT that is acceptable to both the permittees and the agency. Once the TRT is organized, a field trip will be scheduled to evaluate the resource condition of the allotment. This process generally takes around two weeks.

### **The benefits of using a TRT:**

- The TRT evaluation is documented which can provide baseline data to use in making good range management decisions.
- TRT's provide the permittee and agency with a document to use to develop an annual operating plan. The number of AUM's, utilization levels, need for water developments, habitat improvements and time and timing of grazing can all be evaluated.
- TRT's open the lines of communication between permittees and the agencies. The

process gives both parties an opportunity to discuss how and when they will communicate to avoid future disputes.

- TRT's encourage joint range monitoring efforts between permittees and agencies.

For more information on the TRT process, or to request assistance, please contact the Wyoming Agriculture and Natural Resource Mediation Program at (307) 777-8788 or 1-888-996-9278.